

**HAMPTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM  
March 14, 2005 7:00 PM**

**PRESENT:** Virginia Bridle-Russell, James Workman, Cliff Pratt,  
Rick Griffin, Ben Moore  
James Barrington, Town Manager  
Karen Anderson, Administrative Assistant

**SWEARING IN OF TOWN OFFICIALS:** The following Town Officials were sworn into office by Town Clerk, Arleen Andreozzi: Virginia Bridle-Russell, Ben Moore, Selectman; Ellen Lavin, Treasurer; Davina Larivee, Supervisor of the Checklist; Glyn Eastman, Trustee of the Trust Funds; Mary Lou Heran, Bridget Valgenti, Robert Frese, Library Trustees; Thomas Gillick, Planning Board; Russ Bernstein, John Lessard, Richard Nichols, Municipal Budget Committee; Thomas McGuirk, Zoning Board of Adjustment.

**I. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

Senior Seminar students led the salute

Reorganization of the Board of Selectmen

**Mr. Pratt NOMINATED** Mr. Workman as Chairman of the Board of Selectmen.

**Mr. Moore SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

**Mr. Workman MOTIONED** Mr. Pratt as Vice Chairman of the Board of Selectmen.

**Mr. Griffin SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

The Board exchanged seats, with Mr. Moore taking his place at the Selectmen's table.

**II. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Historical Society Program

The Hampton Historical Society will be hosting a program by Gerry Miller on the 1805 Town Surveys on Tuesday, March 15<sup>th</sup> at the Congregational Church beginning at 7:00 PM.

**III. APPOINTMENTS**

1. Ms. Mary Currier, Rockingham County Conservation District. Re: Hurd Farm Easements

Ms. Currier was joined by Mark Gearreald, Town Attorney who stated that they are expecting that the closing on the Hurd Farm easement purchases will take place by the end of March. Attorney Gearreald explained that one of the matters being discussed is having the Rockingham County Conservation District (RCCD) be the primary easement holder. Ms. Currier told the Board that RCCD is prepared to hold the easements and have done so for many other communities since 1982. They are a political subdivision of the State of New Hampshire and as such are eligible to provide this service. Their purpose in holding the easements is to oversee the conservation easement land in order to make sure that the landowners abide by the easements. In order to have a document to work from, a baseline document is established which contains photos of the property and records regarding the property and easements. The document is updated each year, with the original maintained at RCCD and copies filed with required annual reports and with the Town. In order to do this and pay for the annual monitoring and any enforcement necessary, a one-time stewardship fee is charged in the amount of \$100 per acre, resulting in a cost of \$9,800 for the CELP Easement area and \$5,980 for the TPL Easement area. Ms. Currier noted that is the total cost for both towns; noting that there are 18 acres in Hampton Falls. In addition, an annual report to USDA and LCHIP is required and RCCD will handle the reports.

Mr. Pratt asked if it was possible for the Town to put a walkway along Taylor River, and if so how that could be done and if the funds paid by the town to RCCD could be used for that purpose. Ms. Currier said that there are provisions in the grants that would allow a walkway to be put in. The Town of Hampton and

the Hurd Family would have responsibility to maintain current or future trails. Any work on the property can not be detrimental to the purposes of the easement and the landowner is part of the discussions. Attorney Gearreald said that there are 132 acres in Hampton at a stewardship charge of \$100 per acre. Attorney Gearreald said that he believes that the Conservation Commission can utilize the land conservation fund in order to pay the fee. Mrs. Bridle confirmed that this fee will not come out of the town budget. Mr. Workman asked if the fee insures that the annual reporting requirements will be handled. Ms. Currier said that it does. Mr. Workman asked if the wording of the article allows RCCD to hold the easements. Attorney Gearreald said that the town would be an executory interest holder and he believes that satisfies the law. Ms. Currier said that any of the executory interest holders have the same right to monitor and to inspect the property as RCCD with the major difference being that RCCD is mandated to do the inspections and file the reports, while the other easement holders are welcome to make inspections but are not mandated to.

**Mr. Pratt MOTIONED** that the Board of Selectmen authorize the Rockingham County Conservation District to be the primary easement holder as long as the Conservation Commission is in agreement.

**Mrs. Bridle-Russell SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

2. Mr. Robert Estey, Assessor Re: Abatements

Mr. Estey presented the regular abatements #1001 through 1007 with the recommendation that they be approved.

**Mr. Pratt MOTIONED** that abatements #1001 through #1007 be approved for the total amount of \$2,540.06 plus any interest that may accrue.

**Mr. Moore SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

Four veteran's credit abatements were presented for approval.

**Mr. Pratt MOTIONED** that abatements for exemptions #4029 - 4032 be approved.

**Mrs. Bridle-Russell SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

Mr. Workman asked if there has been a change in the laws regarding veteran's exemptions. Mr. Estey explained that there is a change in the State law for exemptions regarding the deadline for application. In the past applications were accepted during the year as residents qualified, however now the deadline for the tax year is April 15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Workman asked if there had been a change in the qualification requirements. Mr. Estey said that there has not been a change, but during the inspection of Hampton's records by DRA recently it was noted that copies of the documentation for exemptions had not been maintained in the files and that is now being required.

Mr. Estey presented the regular sewer abatements, #1001 through #1322 and noted that the abatement filing period has now passed.

**Mr. Pratt MOTIONED** that abatements #1001 through #1322 be approved for the total amount of \$61,514.56 plus any interest that may accrue.

**Mr. Griffin SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

### **III. OLD BUSINESS**

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Barrington noted that budget reviews and options have taken a great deal of staff time this week and it is hoped that the Board of Selectmen will provide direction to the Departments in regard to the default budget.

District Court

Mr. Barrington reported that Attorney Gearreald attended the court accreditation meeting on Friday and a motion was approved to move the court temporarily to Seabrook with the intent of putting the permanent court in Hampton. The Board of Selectmen may want to send a letter to the court, similar to what the Town of Exeter has sent to the State. Mr. Barrington suggested it may be worthwhile for the Hampton Board of Selectmen to meet with the Exeter Board of Selectmen regarding the future of the district courts.

Boat Dock

Mr. Barrington reported that the State permit applications have been brought in and signed for the boat dock permitting. The project is on schedule and construction in the Fall of 2005 is anticipated.

Mr. Griffin asked how the boat dock affects the budget. Mr. Barrington said that it is funded 100% through a grant.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**Refinancing Prior SRF Loans

Mr. Barrington said that he believes that the Town can save significant money by refinancing some of the older SRF loans. A public hearing would be required and the soonest that could be done would be March 28<sup>th</sup> due to publication requirements. Mr. Barrington said that the warrant article that authorized the Hurd Farm easement purchases required financing for no less than fifteen years, so that is what is being planned. An \$8 million bond is being proposed that would cover both purposes. The SRF loans, as they are paid off, will still be eligible for State Aid grants. Mr. Moore asked how much interest would be saved. Mr. Barrington said that the savings anticipated is \$300,000 over the length of the bonds. Mr. Pratt asked if there were any down sides. Mr. Barrington said that if the interest rates were higher than anticipated the loans would not be refinanced. Mr. Workman asked if the \$300,000 is net of any costs. Mr. Barrington said that it was.

**Mr. Moore MOTIONED** that the Board of Selectmen hold a public hearing on March 28, 2005 to take comments on the refinancing of prior SRF loans.

**Mr. Griffin SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

Bond Anticipation Notes

The Board reviewed the paperwork for the bond anticipation notes to be used to until the actual bonds are sold. The BAN is for 30 days at 3.75% in the amount of \$2,005,001.00.

**Mr. Griffin MOTIONED** that the Board of Selectmen authorize the signing of the Bond Anticipation Note in the amount of \$2,005,001.00

**Mr. Pratt SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

Sewer Abatement Request – Late Filing

The Board of Selectmen reviewed the letter requesting a sewer abatement that was filed late. Mr. Moore asked if the Board has approved these in the past. Mr. Barrington said that the Board of Selectmen has in the past denied all late filings. Mr. Estey said that sewer abatements are unique to Hampton. The only mechanism that the Board of Selectmen has to give the money back to the people without sewer is through the abatement process, based on due cause, but the March 1 deadline needs to be adhered to for abatements.

**Mr. Moore MOTIONED** that the Board of Selectmen deny the request for a sewer abatement, due to late filing.

**Mr. Pratt SECONDED**

**VOTE: 3 FOR  
2 OPPOSED–Griffin,  
Pratt)**

Police Grant – 2005 Byrne Justice Assistance Program

Captain Crotts explained that the Town has been receiving the Local Law Enforcement Grants for the past five years and this year the grant has been combined with the Byrne Justice Grant and renamed the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG). Based upon the formula the State uses, seven departments were eligible to receive funds and Hampton has been awarded \$21,688.00. The County will file the required reports and disburse the funds. This is a straight grant and there is no match. A public hearing is required and an agreement with Rockingham County will be required to be signed. The time limit to spend the money is until September, 2008. The funds can not be used for vehicles or luxury items.

**Mr. Pratt MOTIONED** that the Board of Selectmen hold a public hearing on March 21, 2005 to take comments from the public on the acceptance of \$21,688.00 in grant funds through the Justice Assistance Grant.

**Mrs. Bridle SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

Board AppointmentsBudget Committee

**Mr. Pratt MOTIONED** that Mrs. Bridle be the representative to the Budget Committee.

**Mr. Griffin SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

**Mr. Pratt MOTIONED** that Mr. Griffin be the alternate representative to the Budget Committee.

**Mrs. Bridle SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

Planning Board

**Mr. Moore MOTIONED** that Mr. Pratt be the Board of Selectmen member of the Planning Board.

**Mr. Griffin SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

**Mr. Moore MOTIONED** that Mr. Workman be the alternate representative to the Planning Board.

**Mr. Griffin SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

Heritage Commission

**Mrs. Bridle MOTIONED** that Mr. Moore be the representative to the Heritage Commission.

**Mr. Workman SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

Recreation Advisory Council

**Mrs. Bridle MOTIONED** that Mr. Griffin be the representative to the Recreation Advisory Council.

**Mr. Moore SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

Cable Advisory Committee

**Mr. Pratt MOTIONED** that Mr. Griffin be the representative to the Cable Advisory Committee.

**Mrs. Bridle SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

Insurance Review Committee

**Mrs. Bridle MOTIONED** that Mr. Moore be the representative to the Insurance Review Committee.

**Mr. Griffin SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

CIP Committee

**Mr. Griffin MOTIONED** that Mrs. Bridle be the Representative to the Capital Improvement Committee.

**Mr. Moore SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

Default Budget

Mr. Barrington explained to the Board that the Departments have been busy since last week putting together proposals on how to reach the default budget. In addition to the default budget, there is also the

issue of the failure of the private detail fund which precludes private details. Mr. Barrington said that failure of that fund brings a whole set of different problems that he has been working through. The summary of the Town Manager's proposed cuts were reviewed. Mr. Barrington said that with the default budget there will be very little room for anything out of the ordinary. A small contingency has to be allowed for incase of severe snow storms or fires or issues that create unusual demands on the budget. Mr. Barrington explained that there are six Collective Bargaining Agreements and he is going on the assumption that those will not be violated. Four of the six units have stated that they are not interested in opening up their contracts for adjustments due to the default budget. One of the unions has indicated they are willing to talk about issues within their contract and he has not been able to meet with representatives from one union. This is the final year of the current contracts. Mr. Barrington noted that the contracts do not limit management rights to lay off people. As the departments have looked through their budgets on conjunction with the contracts, there have been a variety of approaches in order to reach a goal of a 15% reduction.

The original proposal brought forward by the Fire Department layed off 8 firefighters, but in looking at the costs of unemployment compensation and accrued leaves, it would require 12 firefighters to be laid off. Mr. Barrington noted that the personnel reductions are being done in multiples of four due to contractual requirements. The staffing level is established by the town but all four shifts must be equal.

Mr. Barrington said that his proposal has eliminated health agency contributions all together, and minor cuts have been made in mosquito control.

The police department took a different approach, not eliminating any positions, but pulling the SRO's and Juvenile Officer out of the schools and putting them on patrol to make sure that the patrol levels meet the minimum staffing needs of the department and reduces the amount of overtime needed to backfill for vacations and sick days. There is a significant reduction in the number summer specials as well. The mounted patrol has been eliminated.

The failure of the special revenue account for the police details is a serious impact to the safety at construction sites, beach events such as the Seafood Festival, parades, Penguin Plunge and road races.

Mr. Barrington pointed out that Public Works has taken quite a swipe through a number of the capital projects and some expensive tools. There are items to be cut in the proposal which include the scale at the Transfer Station. By contract any work in this unit done on the weekend is at overtime, so any Transfer Station hours or call-ins for snowplowing or sewer back-ups on the weekend are on overtime.

Mr. Workman said that proposals have been prepared by many departments, but he noted that there were no proposals for reductions from Planning, Cemetery, Town Clerk, Legal or Finance. Mr. Barrington said that Finance has prepared a proposal but he was unable to print it out prior to the packets being prepared.

Mr. Barrington said that while the Board had intended to hold a work session next week on the default budget, he has escalated this because some of the department heads are not going to be available next week and he believes definitive decisions need to be made by the end of the month. It is up to the Board of Selectmen how to approach the cuts and set the policy, but time is of the essence. Mr. Barrington said that he understands that the Board has been given a great deal of information with little time to digest it and he does not expect informed decisions tonight. He asked for some feeling and direction from the Board in terms of where to go with this and he would be in favor of a workshop on the 21<sup>st</sup> to continue the discussion. Mr. Pratt said that he would like tonight to be a meeting to absorb the facts and he does not want to make any rash decisions.

Chief Wrenn said that he was given a directive after town meeting by the Town Manager to cut 15% of his budget and come up with the plan to do it. He also had to make up the approximately \$29,000 that had already been spent in private details. He said he cut just over \$801,000 which was no easy task. The budget has been cut severely and he has questions about the possible impact on safety in the town. There are many

cuts that have been made and he worked hard not to cut any positions. He explained that he has 34 sworn officers, which is the same number the department had 20 years ago. He has tried to increase by four positions for several years to no avail. To cut positions in his department would be ill advised and he will do everything possible to prevent that from happening. He has eliminated a sergeants position that has not been filled, which does not reduce the number of officers. Other reductions include the elimination of the proposed part-time custodian and records clerk. He intends to reduce the number of summer shifts to 110, which may result in a layoff of part-time officers due to their not being enough shifts available. Chief Wrenn explained that the elimination of the SRO program for this year was a difficult decision to make, but it will allow those officers to be placed back on shift and reduce the need to back fill on overtime to cover vacancies due to sick or vacation time. The mounted patrol is proposed to be eliminated. The mounted patrol officers can be used better on motorcycles or cruisers. He has cut out the purchase of the new cruisers this year, which interrupts the rotation cycle of the vehicles that has been a benefit. Chief Wrenn said significant cuts have also been made in all equipment purchases, office supplies and training costs. The training cost cuts have been done responsibly, meeting the state mandates but nothing more.

Chief Wrenn explained that the private detail issue is a major issue. This has complicated matters in the department. It eliminates all private details, which includes construction sites, bars and school functions. Companies are complaining that this is unacceptable, but there is nothing that the town can do. One of the big areas that is going to be troublesome is the Seafood Festival. Normally the Chamber is billed for \$15,000 to \$18,000 for Seafood Festival details for traffic control and the alcohol tent. He has suggested to the Chamber and the Manager that we meet this week to discuss this problem. He added that other problems are the Christmas parade because a lot of traffic detail takes place and the Wednesday night fireworks. The summer operation has been cut by 50% and he has concerns about public safety with the staffing levels. He said he does not know how the importance of this fund could have been made any clearer. Mr. Moore asked if Chief Wrenn's recommendations include benefits. Mrs. Duhamel confirmed that the corresponding benefits and unemployment costs have not been calculated at this time. Mr. Moore asked what actions have to be done to eliminate the mounted patrol. Chief Wrenn said that some money has been left in for stable time until the horses can be sold. He said that there appears to be some ownership issues of the horses that will have to be looked into.

Mr. Barrington said that there has been some discussion with the Superintendent of Schools regarding the status of the SRO's. The invoice in the Board of Selectmen's packet for the SRO's indicated that \$38,000 was billed and paid for September through December, 2004. Mr. Barrington said that the school board believes they have authorized this program through the school year, not the calendar year. A payment was received to cover through December, 2004 and a bill will need to be generated for the first quarter of 2005. Mr. Moore asked if \$38,000 would be sufficient to be able to retain the SRO's. Chief Wrenn said that it would not provide the needed coverage to backfill for vacation and sick time. Mr. Moore asked if the Board demanded that the SRO program stay, how much money would be needed to do that. Chief Wrenn said that he would have to try and determine what that would represent for sick and vacation or injury leave. Mr. Moore said that there has been some suggestion that because there is \$1 in the lines for external and internal details, that would allow the town to fund private details if the funds were available. Mr. Barrington said that could have been true in 2004, but a new law now makes the purpose for something defeated prohibited and the service cannot be funded. Mr. Moore said that \$1 was left in the accounts. Mr. Barrington said that was done through a motion by a member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. Griffin commended the Chief for trying not to lay off people. He was concerned with the lack of private details and how it effects the beach construction and schedule. Chief Wrenn said that it will be impacted to some degree. They were providing 20-25 details per week and many of those were at the beach construction sites. Construction sites will have to be managed with flag people or their own construction people. Mr. Griffin asked if that cost was coming out of the bond. Mr. Barrington said that it was not before, but if the company has to hire other departments that cost will be passed along to Hampton and will come from the \$12 million. Mr. Griffin asked about private details for fireworks. Chief Wrenn said that he does not have private details for fireworks, but his concern is with crowd control and generally had



additional officers working. In the past he would have 20-25 officers working during fireworks and this year he will have 12. Chief Wrenn said that he has been notified by one outside department that they are interested in doing details in the town, but he is not interested in allowing that and would like to see what can be arranged with the County. Chief Wrenn said that this is a real blow to the department's morale and he can't understand the thinking of voting this down. Mr. Griffin said that several officers from other towns are very interested in the outcome of this and he noted that Portsmouth uses the sheriff's department quite a bit and they have a flat rate for details. Chief Wrenn said that Hampton has a minimum rate or time and one-half for the officer, whichever is greater. Chief Wrenn explained that Portsmouth does give it's officers first chance at the details and then the excess go to other departments or the sheriff's department.

The record clerk was going to be a critical position, it is not an approved position this year so that will not be filled. Mr. Griffin asked if the new station is affected. Chief Wrenn said that additional costs for cleaning and utilities have been budgeted but if the early months are any prediction, he may not hit the mark. Mr. Griffin commended Chief Wrenn on his management skills.

Mrs. Bridle-Russell said that she does not have a problem with command officers covering a patrol shift. This Board gave their word that they would put the SRO's in the school if the school would pay for them. The SRO is an important part of the Community and particularly at HAJH and she hears on a daily basis how kids have been helped at HAJH. Mrs. Bridle-Russell said she was very excited to hear you Chief Wrenn met the budget reduction without laying off people. Chief Wrenn said that he fought hard to get the SRO program into the schools and he did not want to have to end it. Mrs. Bridle asked Chief Wrenn how much it would cost to continue the program from March through June in order to show good faith in the agreement with the schools. Chief Wrenn will work on determining that cost.

Mr. Pratt asked if there are any other open positions. Chief Wrenn said that there were not. Mr. Pratt asked how cutting the summer coverage by 50% will affect summer safety. Chief Wrenn said that he is worried about safety in the summer, and will have to watch it very closely. Chief Wrenn said that there may be times that they will only be able to answer large crimes, violence instead of vandalism calls in order to insure that the officers are available for serious calls. Mr. Pratt said that he understands the SRO situation and his recommendation does fix an overtime problem. Mr. Pratt said that he believes the amount of overtime is one of the underlying problems in the town that needs to be attacked. Chief Wrenn said that cutting overtime does cut services and this is one example. Mr. Pratt asked how long we can go without buying new cruisers. Chief Wrenn said that we can go one year, and since he did not reduce maintenance costs he hopes this is a good year for engines and transmissions. Mr. Pratt asked where the other overtime costs were being saved. Chief Wrenn said that investigation times and report writing requirements will have to be relaxed to save overtime costs. Mr. Pratt said that what he questions the most is the reduction in summer shifts and he feels it is a safety issue. Mr. Workman asked if there are any retirements coming up. Chief Wrenn said that Lt. Fincher has applied for disability retirement and he has been notified by Detective Russell of his intent to retire on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Workman asked if those positions will be filled when they come along. Chief Wrenn said that he plans to fill them because they are important positions, however he will look at the detective position to determine if this position will be put on patrol. Mrs. Bridle-Russell asked if having no new cruisers, fewer part-time officers and less people if that will reduce the workload for the captains. Chief Wrenn said that it will not and if anything it will increase their workload.

Mr. Pratt said that he agreed that the defeat of the Special Revenue Fund cut the guts out of the officers and it was shameful to vote that down a second time. Chief Wrenn said that if they truly didn't like the use of this type of fund, he wished that they were all approved for the one year and then eliminated. It is unfortunate that only this one was voted down for the second time.

Chief Lipe said that the Fire Department is currently the best trained working force in New Hampshire with the fastest response time in the State, which has been confirmed nationally. He said that the department responds to 98% of all the emergencies in town within 4 minutes or less, and they are proud of that. To meet the Town Manager's request of 15% from every budget was very challenging to say the least. Some

reductions were made from purchases that were able to be made from residual 2004 funds and grant anticipation appropriations were removed and new public hearings will be held for those projects. Overtime has been reduced by about \$130,000 and in order to meet the 15% cut, layoffs are imminent. Chief Lipe said that based on Department Of Labor rules, unemployment costs and contractual issues, it will require the layoff of 12 firefighters. This was a late development and he does not know at this time who would get layed off in the officer ranks. Chief Lipe said that laying off 12 firefighters will cause the system to fail and bring staffing back to the 1987 levels. Chief Lipe explained that in 1987 four firefighters were added and it remained at that level until 2002 when four additional firefighters were added. He added that when the second deputy chief was added it was part of a re-organization and the elimination of an EMS Training Officer. The proposal that has been presented takes care of the people that they have and keeps that staff well-trained. Voters were told that a reduction in the budget would result in a reduction of manpower and people didn't believe it. Chief Lipe told the Board that he has looked at a five-year comparative and saw that overtime wages in 2004 were less than 2003 for the communications section. The over-time in Fire Prevention has been the same for six years and the only changes have been a result of COLA and contract adjustments. In firefighting, over-time wages were projected to remain the same in 2005 as they were in 2004, which was a big reduction from 2003. The sick wages have actually gone down due to changes in the union contracts and vacation is the same as last year, other than COLA adjustments. The other overtime issue is for training and coverage for sick and vacation days. Chief Lipe said that they have an exorbitant amount of overtime paid out because the same number of people are kept on every shift every day and we don't run short based on the contract and service delivery goals. Reducing manpower and services or closing a fire station are not only violations of the CBA, they are bad for the community and put people at risk.

Mrs. Bridle-Russell said that this stinks, after you lay off 8 firefighters, in all probability one station will be closed. Chief Lipe said he does not intend to close a fire station, but responses will be limited. He said that there is an average of five ambulance calls per day and this system is making a difference in response times. Mr. Pratt said that he is going to attack overtime, because that is what attacks the Board. Chief Lipe said that without violating the contract, the only areas he can adjust are special events overtime, training and call-backs. He generally put special coverage on for the Seafood Festival and Fourth of July and that is what he can regulate. He cannot regulate overtime when it comes to filling shifts for sick time and vacation when he has to replace a body. Mr. Pratt asked about the fire alarm maintenance. Chief Lipe said that is handled by an officer on over-time and the spike in overtime in that account is to allow for moving the system during the construction at the beach. Chief Lipe said that there are only a few people qualified to do the work and if they are on duty when the work is needed, they will call someone in on overtime to cover them so that they can take care of a problem. Mr. Griffin said that he was concerned about the structure of the department and if it is top-heavy in the department; maybe there are too many deputies. Chief Lipe said that in 2001 they took the EMS officer and created the additional Deputy position. Chief Lipe said that with a force their size, there are over 10,000 hours of training and safety requirements that are managed by the Deputy of Safety and Training. He is also the Fire Department Safety Officer and manages the EMS fund. Chief Lipe said that the Captains are the shift commanders and run the show when the Chief and Deputies are not there. We replace a captain with a captain when one is out. Lieutenants manage Station II and work under a captain. Mr. Griffin said that it is obvious that the town has great response times and asked if there is a way we can cut back on the training that we provide. Chief Lipe said that we have to and that is disappointing. Chief Lipe said that training hours have increased substantially since he became chief and they are now positioned to increase the ISO rating under the training category. Mr. Griffin asked about the ambulance service and how it will be affected, and he added that a lot of people have asked him if it is necessary to have fire trucks go out with the ambulance. Chief Lipe said that the fire truck goes with the ambulance to supply the necessary number of people. Mr. Griffin asked if there any possibility of sharing the dispatchers with the police department. Chief Lipe said that was looked at a couple years ago and it was felt that it was not in the best interest of public safety to do that. Mr. Moore asked what policy and procedures will be changed to accommodate the downsizing. Chief Lipe said that he has not done anything as of tonight because he does not know the direction the Board of Selectmen is going to give him. The meter is running and the longer we deliberate the longer we overspend. However, he has taken some immediate actions on other issues; all training has been suspended and a spending freeze will continue



unless it is a maintenance or emergency issue. All scheduled periodic maintenance is frozen. The standard shift configuration with this proposal will be seven, while they are currently at nine. Chief Lipe said that the shift configuration is not contractual. Mr. Moore asked if there are other items that could possibly be shifted to the special revenue fund. Chief Lipe said that there are, but they have to be specifically linked to the EMS article. They can shift other wages, but the problem is making sure they maintain a balance in the account in case they lose the special revenue fund in the future. Mr. Moore said that it might be possible to make a short term change for this year and charge the cost for the EMS wages to the fund. Chief Lipe said that there is a balance of \$289,000 in that account and if it is EMS work it can be charged to that fund. Mr. Barrington said that his only concern is that once that is done it may not be able to be reversed. Mr. Moore noted that it appears from the contract that the Chief can replace a captain with a lieutenant if a captain is not available. Mr. Barrington said that it is rank for rank unless there is no one available and then a lieutenant can be brought up and paid at the captain's rate. Mr. Moore noted that there is a total staff of 48 people, with 29 being firefighters and 19 being administrative or supervisory. He said that if 8 firefighters are cut, there will be 21 firefighters and 19 administrative/supervisory staff. Chief Lipe said that the balance of the organization is a point well taken. Mr. Barrington said that if we have two stations we need two command staffs, but one station would require only one set of command staff.

Mr. Barrington said each of the department heads looked at 15% from their department, organizational wide a shortfall could be made-up from other areas. Chief Lipe said that when the additional four firefighters were added in 2002, we increased the standard to nine. If that standard is dropped back to 8 that would reduce the overtime. Mr. Barrington said that there is a basic difference between what is contractual and what is policy. The police have the option to have four or five with some flexibility. Chief Lipe said that there is a standard shift configuration and that must be maintained at all times. Mr. Barrington said that the number can be changed by management and that can be done once a year or even more often. Chief Lipe said that he does what he is told and he was told to cut 15% and this is how he has done that, although he does not feel it is in the best interest of public safety. Mr. Moore said that he did not expect that any plan submitted would reduce managerial, administrative or supervisory positions but he is confused about how to handle the recommendation that the Chief has provided when he does not believe it could be successful. Mr. Barrington said that this is six days after the election, clearly the departments have tried to do some planning, but they are still trying to work their way through numbers to see what makes sense. Mr. Barrington stressed that everybody has a role in the organization, every person has a function to fulfill or the position would not have been created. We had said consistently that a \$26 million budget was responsible and necessary to do the services that we provide, but the voters said no and that is fine, but now we have to figure out what we can afford. This is the first pass through and sharing some of the reality, there are no easy cuts. Mr. Griffin said that you can't drop the 15% off across the Board, you need to see what the impact would be.

Mrs. Bridle-Russell said that it is the Board's intention to hear from the other department heads. She asked if the Board of Selectmen will be given what is being cut from all the other departments for next week.

Mr. Hangen said he was not sure where to start, but he does respect and appreciate that this is an absorption evening, although he would like a policy direction to make this happen. The voters spoke very loudly and very clearly. Public Works has been in a partnership with the Town Manager and the Board of Selectmen to provide services to the residents. There is a wastewater treatment plant that has to be manned seven days per week and a Transfer Station that is open seven days per week. We have been on a mode to give the best services. It is important to understand that there is a new economy and we have had the same number of employees for nineteen years. Mr. Hangen said that his employees only work overtime if there is an emergency such as a sewer blockage, a storm or if another department has an emergency and they try to use the limited time available judiciously. Mr. Hangen said that his proposal will cut one position that has not been filled. With that said, he stated he could not come to terms with making a recommendation for additional staff reductions because we have been training our people for such a long time and you can't get that experience back. He has put together a reduction of \$1 million with the most visible being the closing of the Transfer Station on one of the weekend days and eliminating Spring Clean-up, Mrs. Bridle-Russell

asked how much the total Public Works budget was. Mr. Hangen said it was around \$7.8 million. Mrs. Bridle-Russell noted that problem at Five Corners was caused by a collapsed drain that had been proposed to be fixed. Mr. Hangen said that he has kept in three drain projects and cut three other projects. Mr. Pratt asked if there is any possibility of asking the union for permission to adjust shifts to allow the work at the Transfer Station to be done on the weekend, without overtime. Mr. Barrington said that they can be asked, but it is unknown if they would be willing to do that. Mr. Barrington said that he will be happy to talk to them, the last time this was discussed with them they were not willing to do that, but times have changed. Mr. Pratt said that trash expenses strap this town tremendously and the town should get out of the trash business. The town should wash their hands of it and contract it out completely. Mr. Hangen said that from a personal point of view the voters, in voting no for the budget, are not mad only at Hampton but that was the only place there were able to say no about the economy. A lot of budgets throughout the area failed. Mr. Pratt asked if a proposal could be made to out source the trash. Mr. Hangen said that he would be happy to do that for the Board of Selectmen and it would take between \$1.6 and \$1.7 million out of the budget. Mr. Pratt said that he wants to make it clear to the voters that trash at the beach is picked up seven days a week in the summer and restaurants all around town are picked up five days per week all year. This town is built on services. Mr. Pratt said that as a taxpayer in Hampton he is subsidizing those pickups because he puts his trash out once per week.

Mr. Moore said that privatizing the trash service is very interesting but he is not sure it is a valid proposal to meet the default budget. Mr. Barrington said that he believes it could be put into place by May 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Griffin said that he agrees with Mr. Moore and he thinks that it is too fast to make such a change. He said that as a single person without children in the school system he is penalized all the time and he does not want to see people at the beach penalized in any way. Mr. Pratt said that some costs have to be shifted and he would rather pay for his own trash privately than lay off 12 fireman. Mr. Griffin said that there just isn't enough time to do something that important. Mrs. Bridle said that she agrees with Mr. Moore and Mr. Griffin and is concerned that the cuts automatically come from Public Works. Mr. Workman said that if they cut the services, more infrastructure could remain. Services are the easier way to alleviate the burden and if privatizing the waste collection can be done for a reasonable cost to the residents he would be in favor of it. Mr. Moore said that if the savings are realized, some of the capital costs could be put back. Mr. Workman said that he had pictured a scenario of private waste collection, but with the town maintaining the transfer station. Mr. Hangen said that the question is how to provide the same level of service at, or as close to the same cost as possible. Mr. Hangen said that he is willing to put the package together but wanted to make sure that the Board of Selectmen is serious about being willing to make the change. Mr. Workman said that the advantage with the capital projects in the Public Works is that the decisions can be delayed since most of that work is done in the Fall. Mr. Workman asked if it is possible to outsource the waste collection/disposal without laying off people. Mr. Hangen said that he believes that there would have to be some layoffs, but how many is unknown. Mrs. Bridle-Russell said that if we were to privatize the trash collection, the taxpayers would get a bill for their trash collection as well as a tax bill. Mr. Moore suggested the Board discuss this on an agenda in April, after the default budget is completed. Mr. Griffin agreed with Mr. Moore.

**Mr. Pratt MOTIONED** that Mr. Hangen be authorized to go out to bid for the privatization of the trash services at this time.

**Mr. Workman SECONDED**

Mr. Workman said that the sooner the Board has this information the better served they are. Every dollar saved in public works is a dollar that can be used for public safety. Mr. Moore said that he suggested looking into this in April because Mr. Hangen has requested some structure from the Board. Mr. Hangen said that he could put together a bid proposal that would require the same level of services for all residents with a price fixed for five-years and a guarantee of no more than a 3% increase for the following five years. He would also make it a priority that the company maintain business pickups at the current level and pick up the beach on the weekends as is now done. Mr. Hangen said that he would try to preserve as many PW's employees as possible. Mr. Moore said that the town would be giving a monopoly to a private business.

Mr. Hangen said that his proposal is in two parts; meeting the needs of the default budget at this time and then working with the rubbish issue for future expenses. Mr. Hangen said that he does not see this happening until the Fall or even next year. Mr. Griffin said that the voters are looking at how the default budget was accommodated last year. Mr. Pratt said that last year it was only \$400,000 that was cut and this year it is \$2.8 million. Mrs. Bridle said that there are a lot of departments that have not been heard from. Mr. Moore said that if Mr. Hangen has enough information to go out for an RFP he does not have a problem with him going forward at this time. Mrs. Bridle said that as long as that is not considered the saving grace to save everything else.

**VOTE: 3 FOR  
2 OPP (Griffin, Bridle)**

Mr. Pratt said that he would like to see if the Public Work's union would be willing to shift the work days to have weekends without overtime. Mr. Hangen asked if he has the Board's blessing to try and get an agreement with the union to close the Transfer Station on a weekday in exchange for one day of the weekend. Mr. Barrington said that the optimum choice is to have the Transfer Station open five days per week, being closed on two weekdays. Mr. Barrington said that he will report back to the Board on that next week. Mr. Griffin said that he is in favor of that and that he is not in favor of privatizing pick-up. Mr. Moore asked if the Transfer Station schedule has to be the same all year. Mr. Barrington said that there is a summer and winter schedule. Mr. Moore asked about the brush burning. Mr. Hangen said that they have been burning brush since the landfill was closed and it is a cost savings, but it has been a problem. It effects people's breathing and the smoke goes into neighborhoods. He noted that he is still talking to a contractor about getting compost in exchange for grinding our brush. It would result in a net savings of \$35,000 to the town.

Recreation Director, Dyana Martin explained that she covers three specific areas, parks, recreation and parking lots. She has an SRF to cover programs and was able to make cuts in both the parks and parking lot budgets to meet the default budget. All new parks equipment has been eliminated and the replacement of the boards at the in-line hockey arena has been delayed. The in-line hockey area will be closed this year and as a result of the failure of the warrant article for the tennis court repairs, the courts will be closed for the year as well. Both areas are unsafe in their present condition. Proposed signs have been removed from the budget as well as funds for infield mix and paving projects. Mrs. Martin told the Board that the parks served about 3,000 people over the past summer and over 8,000 people were served over the entire year. The cuts she has recommended in the parking lots are in personnel and projects that are not going to be done. Mrs. Bridle-Russell asked about the Parks Coordinator and if that position could be seasonal, rather than year round. Mrs. Martin said that the Parks Coordinator does a lot of the snow removal around the town buildings, maintenance on equipment and plans for the next season. Mrs. Bridle-Russell noted that Mr. Boudreau is the Program Coordinator and runs the programs; Mr. Patch runs the parks; the department secretary does the registrations. She asked what the Director does. Mrs. Martin said that she oversees all of the staff and maintains input on all programs and maintenance needs, handles all of the accounting for the department and oversees all of the parking lot activities. Mrs. Bridle-Russell asked who drives the bus. Mrs. Martin said that she and both the Parks Coordinator and Program Coordinator can drive it and all have for various programs. Mr. Moore asked if cutting the staff from the parking lots will effect revenue. Mrs. Martin said she did not think so because that account had a surplus last year. Mr. Moore asked about the account in Other Safety Services for lifeguards. Mr. Barrington said that the State provides the lifeguards for Sun valley and North Beach and did not bill the town for several years, however they did bill the town in 2004.

Due to the late hour, Mr. Workman asked the Board if they want to continue. The Board of Selectmen agreed to take some public comments at this time and continue with the budget discussion next week.

## **V. MINUTES**

The minutes of March 7, 2004 were accepted as written.

## VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Fred Rice, Heather Lane noted that this was not an easy night for the Board and a couple of things came to his mind. He said that if this discussion was held two weeks ago this probably would not have had to happen because the voters trusted the yellow sheets they received and made some bad decisions. Mr. Rice said that there are two levels of service, public safety services and quality of life services, and he does not believe 15% across the board makes sense. Given the choice, it doesn't matter to him to wait three hours to register his car or wait in line to check out a book, but he does not want to wait for five seconds longer than he does now for a police officer if he is being robbed or for a fire engine if his house is on fire. If there are less cops on the beach, the trouble makers will come to the beach. He emphasized that the Board of Selectmen has the obligation to protect the residents of Hampton. Mr. Rice said that he believes that if a special election was held the budget would pass.

Mr. Russ Bernstein said that the privatization of the trash system would only result in taking the \$1.7 million out of the budget and passing it along to the residents through a different bill. Mr. Bernstein said that the town's people voted against the budget because they don't want to pay any more.

Mr. Brian Warburton said that he was always proud to put forth the best information available on the proposed budget. He said that he stood outside last Tuesday because he was proud of the community, but all he heard from people that were voting against the budget were their concerns about how much money some employees made. Many people were stunned with the proposed cuts to meet the default budget. He said that he does not believe that a 15% across the board is correct and that priorities have to be made. He asked if it is his understanding that the trash collection privatization wouldn't be part of the default equation. Mr. Workman said that depending on when the RFP comes back it could adjust the time frames. Mr. Warburton said that the importance of public safety has been stressed since September 11, 2001. One of the most telling comments he heard tonight was when Chief Wrenn said that he was nervous about having 110 shifts a week during the summer. Mr. Warburton said that a special town meeting is in order and he does not believe that people understood the impact of what they were voting. We are a community that is well respected throughout the area and if we want people to continue to come to Hampton we have to address these issues. Mr. Warburton said that the Board of Selectmen have to make their decision and the sooner the better.

Mr. John Bridle, 340 Lafayette Road told the Board that he was present both as an individual and as a member of the School Board. He said last March, the Board talked about cutting the funding for the SRO program due to the default budget of 2004. On May 17, 2004 the Hampton School Board was joined by Chief Wren and the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen and the School Board motioned to fund \$40,000 for an SRO for the 04-05 school year. He stated that the School District budget goes from July 1 to June 30 and he asked that the Board of Selectmen keep their word and keep the SRO officer in place at HAJH until the end of the school year. Mr. Bridle said that it is a position that the school board and many parents feel strongly about.

## VI. ADJOURNMENT

**Mrs. Bridle-Russell MOTIONED** that the meeting be adjourned. (11:45 PM)

**Mr. Pratt SECONDED**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR**

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Chairman

